Quiz

1) Which word/phrase do you use to interrupt and disagree with what somebody has said?

   a. although
   b. hang on
   c. nonsense

2) What’s the best answer if you want to disagree with this statement: “You never help tidy the house.”?

   a. I don’t agree. I think you’re the one causing all the trouble.
   b. That’s nonsense! Of course I don’t.
   c. Hang on a minute! Yesterday I spent the whole day cleaning.

3) Which expression of strong disagreement is incorrect?

   a. It’s very nonsense!
   b. It’s absolute nonsense!
   c. It’s complete nonsense!
Answers

1) The correct answer is B. We might say: 'Hang on a minute!'

2) The correct answer is C. Hang on a minute! Yesterday I spent the whole day cleaning

3) The answer is A. The incorrect form or disagreeing is 'It’s very nonsense!’
Transcript

Jackie
Hello - welcome to the programme, with me, Jackie Dalton. This programme is all about expressions you can use when you think someone is wrong about something and you want to disagree with them.

EXAMPLE

John Humphrys
Well, you added those bits...

Tony Blair
No, no - let's be absolutely clear, because before any of those things...

Jackie
We're going to do this with the help of British Prime Minister, Tony Blair. He was recently interviewed by John Humphrys, a BBC journalist.

Tony Blair disagreed with quite a lot of the things John Humphrys said and we're going to look at some of the language he used when he did this - language you could use in all kinds of situations when you disagree with someone.

In the first example, Tony Blair responds to John Humphrys by using one of the simplest words in the English language.

EXAMPLE

John Humphrys
Shouldn't you be apologising to those people?

Tony Blair
No, I don't think we should be apologising.

Jackie
No - a direct way of disagreeing. Be careful about how you use such direct language. As with a lot of language we'll hear today, your tone of voice can be very important in how you come across. This person disagrees quite politely.
**EXAMPLE**

**Voice 1**
You always come to work late.

**Voice 2**
No, I don't.

**Jackie**
But here, she sounds more aggressive.

**EXAMPLE**

No, I don't.

**Jackie**
Listen to this next clip. What phrase does Tony Blair use in these examples to express his disagreement?

**EXAMPLES**

**Tony Blair**
You see, I mean, I don't agree with that. I understand that's the argument against what we've done, but I don't agree with it.

**John Humphrys**
Bending the intelligence...

**Tony Blair**
Well, I don't agree with that at all...

**Tony Blair**
I'm a great admirer of Kofi's, but we obviously disagree about this issue.

**Jackie**
He uses the verb **to agree** in the negative - **I don't agree** - and he uses the verb **to disagree** - **I disagree**. Now we'll hear Tony Blair using a slightly more formal structure:
EXAMPLE

John Humphrys
And it's made this country a more dangerous place.

Tony Blair
Well, I don't accept that, either.

Jackie
I don't accept that - another way of saying you don't agree with something that's just been said.

EXAMPLE

John Humphrys
The failure of that responsibility...

Tony Blair
Well, I don't accept that we failed in that responsibility.

Jackie
Sometimes you may agree with part of what someone says, but disagree with other parts. What structure does Tony Blair use to do that here?

EXAMPLE

John Humphrys
Many of them loyal to their own warlords.

Tony Blair
Well, I think that although it is true to say that there are far too many parts of the police that are sectarian and so on...

John Humphrys
They're...

Jackie
Tony Blair shows that he agrees with some of what John Humphrys has said, but he tries to go on to say that there are other things he disagrees with.
We know he disagrees with part of what John has said because he uses the word **although** at the beginning of his sentence: **Although it's true to say.** He never quite finishes his sentence to tell us what he doesn't agree with so let's listen to a more complete example of that phrase in use.

**EXAMPLE**

**Voice 1**
He doesn't work hard enough and he's bad for the company!

**Voice 2**
Although it's true to say he doesn't work as much as he should, I think he's very clever and could help the company a lot.

**Jackie**
You could also use **while** instead of **although**.

**EXAMPLE**

While it's true to say he doesn't work as much as he should, I think he's very clever and he could help the company a lot.

**Jackie**
In this next clip, John Humphrys says something that Tony Blair disagrees with. What's the phrase that Tony Blair uses to interrupt him?

**EXAMPLES**

**John Humphrys**
Elected their own government, we're now telling...

**Tony Blair**
Well, hang on a minute John! They excluded...

**John Humphrys**
Oh no well you added those bits...

**Tony Blair**
Well hang on...
John Humphrys
You added those bits...

Tony Blair
No, no, before any of those things...

Jackie
**Hang on a minute.** This sometimes just means **wait**, but here it's a way of saying, **Stop, I don't agree and there's something I want to say.** He then corrects him.

EXAMPLES

John Humphrys
Elected their own government, we're now telling...

Tony Blair
Well, hang on a minute John! They excluded...

John Humphrys
Oh no well you added those bits...

Tony Blair
Well, hang on...

John Humphrys
You added those bits...

Tony Blair
No, no, before any of those things...

Jackie
Let's end on some very strong statements of disagreement.

EXAMPLES

Tony Blair
Process but...

John Humphrys
You'd already decided by then.
Tony Blair
That is really not true, but, I mean...

Tony Blair
I most certainly do not accept that he was not a threat.

Jackie
Both Tony Blair's words and his tone of voice make it very clear he disagrees. He uses the adverbs **really** and **most certainly** to show how strongly he disagrees with what's been said.

**EXAMPLES**

Tony Blair
That is really not true, but, I mean...

I most certainly do not accept that he was not a threat.

Jackie
Finally, there are some very strong informal - and sometimes quite rude - ways of disagreeing with someone that you might come across, although be careful about when you use them. Here they are.

**EXAMPLES**

That's nonsense!

That's rubbish!

Jackie
Again, these expressions can be made stronger, this time, with adjectives.

**EXAMPLES**

That's complete nonsense!

That's absolute rubbish!

Jackie
Although Tony Blair did seem to get quite cross in this interview, he never got quite angry enough to use those words.